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CHALLENGE

THE REVOLUTIONARY COMMUNIST NEWSPAPER OF PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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Communist Internationalism:

Red Flag, Not the Bosses' Flag

Recently, a German auto worker was invited to address a UAW regional conference. The conference opened, as do all UAW meetings, with the Pledge of Allegiance to the bosses' flag and the playing of the bosses' national anthem. In the German worker's two minutes, he recounted the recent Opel strikes in Europe, saying, "I was looking at your banner on the wall, 'American Jobs Are Worth Fighting For!' I would make just one suggestion. It should read, 'Workers Jobs Are Worth Fighting For, All Around The World!'" The room burst into applause. The same workers who were just "pledging allegiance" were enthusiastically applauding a call for international solidarity.

This reflects the contradiction within the working class between patriotism and nationalism on the one hand, and internationalism on the other. Patriotism represents the bosses' outlook, is pushed by the union leadership and is misleading the workers to increased poverty and wider wars. Internationalism represents the workers' outlook, is fought for by our Party and will lead the working class to the seizure of power and communist revolution.

"Buy American" and "saving the U.S. auto industry" has led the UAW leadership to help the bosses eliminate about 100,000 jobs at GM, Ford and Delphi while passively agreeing to healthcare cuts for retirees and the recent Delphi contract slashing wages over $10/hour.

During the past decade, Boeing has shed tens of thousands of workers in the name of "beating Airbus," their giant European competitor. These Boeing workers have been replaced by tens of thousands of unorganized workers, mostly immigrants, in large and small sub-contractor factories in southern California earning $9/hour, without health insurance.

Millions of undocumented immigrant workers live and work in the most oppressive conditions, under threat of immigration raids and mass deportations. They have been accused in the mass media and many union halls of "stealing U.S. jobs." Tens of thousands of Arab and Muslim immigrants have been rounded up, harassed at work and at airports, and watched by the police under the guise of "Homeland Security." This increased police state is used against citizen workers — West Coast dock workers were told a strike would be considered a threat to Homeland Security.

In all these cases, the bosses have used patriotism and nationalism to deepen the attacks on all workers and produce added profits that finance the imperialist slaughter in Iraq. The bosses will use nationalist and patriotic ideas to win millions of workers, immigrant and citizen alike, to support wider and deadlier wars.

Workers in the U.S. are hardly the only ones being bombarded with patriotism and nationalism. Several years ago, British Ford workers demonstrated against their plant closing, only to hear their union leaders demand more plant closings in the U.S.! More recently, workers across Europe marched and rallied against the loss of 10,000 jobs at Airbus. But this international solidarity was undermined by union leaders in France and Germany calling for plant closings in other countries.

In China, rapid industrialization and economic growth is creating a massive migration of rural workers to the cities. Workers have engaged in thousands of strikes and demonstrations over dangerous working conditions and rotten housing. Recently, Chinese bosses — still wrapped in the flag of the old Chinese Communist Party — organized over one million people to demonstrate against Japanese fascists' atrocities in World War II, to divert people from this sharpening class struggle.

Nationalism and patriotism are the dominant ideas in the world, especially since the reversals of the Russian Revolution in the 1950's

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WORKERS AND YOUTH FIGHT KILLER KKKOPS

CHICAGO, August 6 — "My son is only four years old and he's already seen two murders!" said an angry young black mother. She and two other black women witnessed the police murder of 18-year-old Aaron Harrison (A-yo) the night before and described it as a modern day lynching. She told PLP, "We saw him smiling as he was outrunning the police, with his shirt off and arms in the air. Then we saw the cop just stop and shoot. We thought it was a warning shot until we saw him fall on the ground. He was still breathing but when the cops handcuffed him and turned him over that's when we saw him die. He was looking right at us." Everyone in the community said that Aaron was unarmed.

The streets filled with angry friends and family members. The police began taunting them by laughing and shining their lights in their faces. One police sergeant said, "What, you don't like the new streetlights we put up in the neighborhood?" He was referring to the police spotlight shining down on Aaron's dead body! They let him bleed to death for 2-3 hours even though there is a major trauma center just a few blocks away. The cops never called the coroner. Instead they threw his dead body in the back of the paddy wagon, still handcuffed, "like he was a piece a meat."

This blatant racism makes many black youth not only hate the cops but also refused to join the military as canon fodder in the bosses' oil wars.

Hundreds of angry workers and youth fought back, throwing bricks and bottles and whatever they could find at the police. They flattened the tires of 20 police cars and flipped over one car with the cop still inside. Some cops were sent to the hospital.

The following afternoon, a local preacher organized a small rally in a neighborhood park. PLP distributed a poster stating, "Wanted for Murder – Racist Chicago Police!" Our flier supported the rebellion and called for communist revolution. People put the Wanted Poster on their T-shirts and on street signs. We made many contacts and distributed dozens of CHALLENGES. We marched with workers and youth to the local police station demanding the release of six youth who were arrested earlier that day. One was Aaron's cousin. "No Justice, No Peace, No Racist Police!" was one of the chants led by A-yo's angry friends and neighbors.

Religious misleaders like Rev. Hatchet have been attempting to pacify angry workers with "solutions" like reporting police murders to the Office of Professional Standards (OPS). Hatchet is a supporter of Mayor Daley, who is notorious for his long racist history. As state's attorney, he prosecuted many defendants who had been tortured by the infamous police captain Burge and his squad. Now Daley is the head of OPS!

The "more militant camp" is now led by Al Sharpton, who opened his National Action Network here a few weeks ago. He accused Jesse Jackson of "failing to hold Mayor Daley accountable on police torture." Sharpton and a long list of misleaders rallied on August 10, calling on the Feds to bring in an independent prosecutor. Our job is to expose them all as agents of the racist ruling class.

No independent prosecutor, OPS, or citizen review board will end the racist terror of these killer cops. Racism is rooted in capitalism, the system that exploits all workers. We need to win millions of workers, soldiers and youth, especially like those who fought the police when Aaron was murdered, to fight for a communist world without money, profits, racism and exploitation. Communist revolution will destroy racist police terror.✪

PLP CONFRONTS MINUTEMEN IN CHICAGO, page 3

editorial

WARMAKING RULERS TOUT NEW ACADEMIC RACIST BOOK

Intellectuals pushing phony theories of inherent racial and ethnic differences have long aided the profit system's worst crimes. Genocide, imperialist war, police terror, mass jailings, and state-enforced poverty have all had professorial backers. Our Party has consistently exposed and fought pro-capitalist racist frauds, like Richard Herrnstein, Arthur Jensen and E.O. Wilson. Now a new chapter in academic racism's ugly history has appeared. The New York Times (8/7/07) printed a rave review of a book, "A Farewell to Alms," by University of California professor Gregory Clark, to be published in September by Princeton University Press.

A LIBERAL 'BACK-TO-SCHOOL' SPECIAL

Clark blends the discredited theories of Malthus, Social Darwinism and Sociobiology to argue that wealth and poverty stem from inherited, perhaps genetic, traits.

At first glimpse, Clark's book seems to signal the next phase of a clever, profoundly pro-war, anti-communist, racist ideological campaign.

While only the book's introduction is publicly available now, online, the liberal media have the full text and are mounting an early free publicity campaign aimed at the Fall school term. As U.S. rulers (with their British allies) war for control of the Middle East and crack down on workers at home, what we've seen of "Farewell" leads to two false and deadly conclusions: Anglo-American genetic superiority and the futility of trying to help the poor.

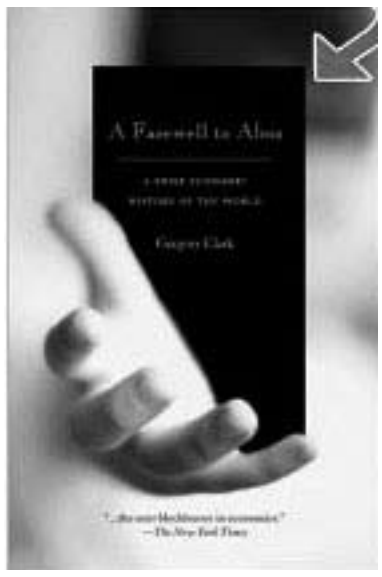
Clark "proves" his point by focusing on the vast explosion in wealth, in a very few countries, caused by the Industrial Revolution, which began in England around 1800. Before that, he says, humanity was caught in a "Malthusian trap," in which the inability of stagnant food supplies to sustain a growing population continually stifled growth and impoverished the masses.

In Malthus's view, which Clark shares, war, famine and plague became positive boons, since they reduce the population that has to be fed. Clark ignores facts, like the overriding role of social organization — that is, politics. The warmongering, slavery-based Roman Empire, for example, managed to feed a million people in its capital for centuries. Industrial development took off first in England two centuries ago, he says, not because British capitalist imperialism was on the rise, but because British nobles had lots of children, who thus passed on a gene pool bigger and better than that of, say, the less fertile Chinese or Japanese lords. "The embedding of bourgeois values in the culture, and perhaps even the genetics, was for these reasons the most advanced in England." (Intro., p. 13) Using "perhaps" is scholarly sleight of hand. It lets Clark promote racist genetic determinism, without, in the eyes of academic hair-splitters, technically hanging his hat on it.

IGNORES IMPERIALISM, SLAVERY, FEARS MENTIONING COMMUNISM

Clark unabashedly and unscientifically cheerleads for the profit system, "growth in capitalist economies since the Industrial Revolution strongly promoted reduced inequality." (p. 14) Apparently, he has never heard of the slaves in the colonies that produced cotton for barefoot, ill-fed children to weave into cloth in England's "dark Satanic mills." In fact, in his book's introduction, subtitled "A Brief Economic History of the World," Clark never even mentions slavery, imperialism or colonies. And forget about communism or even socialism. The Times' reviewer, supposedly seeking "balance" from other academics' comments, completely ignores any even remotely Marxist refutation of Clark's absurdities.

Clark's book wouldn't be so dangerous if it were merely a distortion of remote history. But its introduction reads like a dressed-up, Anglo-American version of Hitler's "Mein Kampf," a manifesto of racial superiority. In explaining the contrast between mainly white Australia's affluence and mainly black sub-Saharan Africa's poverty, Clark speaks of "persistent cultural advantage." (p. 17) According to that logic, U.S. and British Exxon Mobil, Chevron, BP and Shell have an unchallengeable right to dominate the Mid-East's oil. Clark even echoes Malthus's 1790's claim that helping the poor was counterproductive.



"The Farewell to Alms" by Gregory Clark

The Times' arch-imperialist columnist Nicholas Kristof (8/9/07) glowingly refers to Clark, who "argues that conventional aid can leave African countries worse off than ever." Clark champions "middle-class values of non-violence, literacy, long working hours and a willingness to save" (Times' review). But hold these words to a mirror and read what Clark sees in society's enemies: violence, illiteracy, idleness and wastefulness. These are the very charges that racist U.S. rulers have lodged for centuries against black people, immigrants, and the working class in general.

At first glimpse, Clark's book seems to signal the next phase of a clever, profoundly pro-war, anti-communist, racist ideological campaign. Liberal Clark tries to avoid the taint of open racism. He wrote an op-ed article for the Baltimore Sun (8/6/07) calling for greatly eased restrictions on immigration. But Clark understands that U.S. capitalists always need access to cheap labor and today stand in dire need of more ground troops. Only time will tell whether Clark becomes a major or a minor shaper of the rulers' racist ideas. Liberal universities like the University of California and Princeton will continue to play the leading role. We must constantly unmask and attack academic racists wherever we confront them.

(A good book exposing "scientific" racism is "The Legacy of Malthus" by Allan Chase, Knopf, 1977.)

WHAT WE FIGHT FOR:

☆Progressive Labor Party (PLP) fights to smash capitalism — wage slavery. While the bosses and their mouthpieces claim "communism is dead," capitalism is the real failure for billions all over the world. Capitalism returned to the Soviet Union and China because socialism failed to wipe out many aspects of the profit system, like wages and division of labor.

☆Capitalism inevitably leads to wars. PLP organizes workers, students and soldiers to turn these wars into a revolution for communism — the dictatorship of the proletariat. This fight requires a mass Red Army led by the communist PLP.

☆Communism means working collectively to build a society where sharing is based on need. We will abolish work for wages, money and profits. Everyone will share in society's benefits and burdens.

☆Communism means abolishing racism and the concept of race.

☆Communism means abolishing the special oppression of women workers.

☆Communism means abolishing nations and nationalism. One International working class, one world, one Party.

☆Communism means the Party leads every aspect of society. For this to work, millions of workers — eventually everyone — must become communist organizers. Join Us!

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Red Flag, Not Bosses' Flag

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and the Chinese Revolution in the 1960's. It was nationalism, in the form of supporting "national liberation" and uniting with "good" bosses that undermined and reversed those revolutions. Material concessions — growing wage inequalities, trading with "good" capitalists, etc. — had to be justified politically to workers, leaving them ideologically unprepared to oppose the growth of new "red" ruling classes.

'COMMUNIST INTERNATIONALISM IS THE ONLY ANTIDOTE TO THIS POISON'

Communists fight for the international solidarity of the whole working class. Communist revolution will smash all borders. Our Party operates on these principles, as we build the movement for the seizure of power. PLP raises the banner of "Workers of the World, Unite!" We fight to build a mass international PLP across all borders. From New York City to Oaxaca, Mexico, from L.A. to El Salvador, from Colombia to Pakistan, wherever PLP exists, our revolutionary communist politics are the same, whatever the language.

We must bring these politics into the class struggle, and sharpen the fight against our own ruling class, bosses, cops, politicians and union mis-leaders. Our greatest act of international solidarity is fighting our bosses and school administrators where we are, and to organize inside the military. Simultaneously, we must reach out to support workers fighting worldwide, whether it's shipbuilders in Mississippi, GM workers in Russia, Toyota workers in the Philippines, Delphi workers in Spain or Morocco, teachers in Oaxaca or Lima, or miners in Chile or South Africa.

PLP recently celebrated the 40th anniversary of the 1967 Detroit Rebellion against racism (see page 8). That armed uprising of mostly black workers was not only the most significant anti-racist action of our time, but by forcing U.S. imperialism to divert troops headed for Vietnam to Detroit, it was also one of the greatest acts of international solidarity with the heroic Vietnamese workers and peasants.

Patriotism ties the workers to the ruling class. But these two classes are not the same. Some must work to eat while others live off our labor. A farmer in Oaxaca, an autoworker in Germany, an oil worker in Venezuela and an unemployed youth in Detroit, all have more in common with each other than with their own bosses. The international working class must sell our labor power to live. "I am Mexican," "I am German," "I am American" does not reflect who we really are or the world we live in.

The fact that autos and steel can be produced and sold everywhere has shrunk the world and increased the ability of auto, steel and aerospace workers to reach around it. By chasing the globe for markets and cheap labor, the bosses are bringing us closer together and as Marx said, creating their own grave-diggers.

But no matter how many graves are dug, the bosses will never jump in on their own. They will have to be pushed in, buried and have a new world built over their graves by revolutionary workers, soldiers and youth, led by a mass international PLP. As the world's imperialists sharpen their daggers against each other, and wider wars loom, opportunities to fight for internationalism are growing. ✪

This week's CHALLENGE is a three week issue. We return to a bi-weekly schedule on September 5th.

PROGRESSIVE LABOR PARTY

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Industrial Workers Greet PLP Project with Open Arms

LOS ANGELES, CA., August 13 — The first three weeks of PLP's Summer Project involving 50 students and teachers, and directed towards industrial, transit, garment workers and students, has been a huge success. Volunteers gained a deeper understanding of PLP's ideas and appreciation for the potential of CHALLENGE to become a beacon for the industrial working class.

In order to effectively prepare for wider wars against other imperialists, the U.S. ruling class must reindustrialize and use increased racism against black and immigrant workers to super-exploit many more workers — including whites — in the growing subcontractor shops in California, the South and the Southwest. We saw the need and potential to bring our revolutionary communist anti-racist politics, through our CHALLENGE sales, to our brothers and sisters.

A comrade who gets out about 300 CHALLENGES per issue led a discussion in a study group about distributing the paper and asking for donations, with the understanding that PLP is the communist party of the working class and CHALLENGE is the workers' paper. He explained that in his experience workers generally like CHALLENGE when we get it to them. From this, we all took the distribution of the paper and asking for donations more seriously.

The workers' response to CHALLENGE has been great. Over 3,300 workers have bought the paper, 1,600 of the August 1 issue and 1,700 so far of the August 15 issue. For example, at one transit division, in an hour we sold over 90 papers to the multi-racial workforce, distributed over 200 leaflets, collected over $18 and one worker bought a subscription. At several factories we sold around 300 papers. This response to CHALLENGE can lead to more readers, sellers, and groupings around the paper in schools, factories and barracks.

In a study group about political economy, we further understood the "secret" of how profits are stolen from workers' labor and about the bloody and relatively short history of racist capitalism. We are already talking to workers about what we've learned about how they live every day.

A high point was an inspiring talk given by a veteran comrade who worked and organized on the railroads for over 11 years and helped found PLP. He urged us to fight with patience and persistence to build groupings around CHALLENGE — which will become our organizing base — and to fight for communism among workers, soldiers, students and teachers.

This was followed by a two-day communist school for present and future teachers on teaching communism in the classrooms and using CHALLENGE.

Another communist school discussed why industrial workers and soldiers are crucial to leading a revolution and building communism: the industrial workers' key role in producing weapons, their collectivity and organization, and soldiers' vital role in fighting — or not fighting — imperialist war. Industrial workers and soldiers are at the heart of the contradiction between themselves and the bosses. As inter-imperialist rivalry sharpens, they're in the best position to feel the contradictions of capitalism in flesh and blood, to see the need to destroy it and build a communist society based on meeting workers' needs. All sections of society — students, teachers, other workers, and professionals — are important, indeed essential, as allies of the working class in the fight for revolution.

Workers can't escape exploitation— Join the fight to end it

Out of their experiences in this Project and in New Orleans, several young students became interested in joining the industrial work. "My mother was exploited in the maquila in Mexico," said one youth, "forced to work from 4:30 AM to 4:30 PM for wages that we couldn't live on. Now I have to work and I want to help fight to end exploitation." Another was moved by workers' responses at the factories. He said, "My Dad has told me about the mistreatment he got at work, and I want to be part of the fight against it!" Others want to continue to bring CHALLENGE to workers and fellow students.

In building PLP and fighting for the Party to become more embedded in the working class, this Summer Project has been one more step forward on the road to revolution.✪

Immigrant Workers Lead Wildcat vs. Firings, Deportation Threats

CHICAGO, IL August 10 – A two-week strike ended today at the Cygnus soap packaging plant. There are only 120 workers; all immigrants, mostly women, many undocumented and 90% are temporary workers who have worked there for years. None are in a union. Most are open to PLP.

Cygnus packages soap for Lever Bros., Target, Walgreens and many hotels. The wages and working conditions are lousy. Most workers were making $6.50/hour while technically working for a temp agency. The small percentage of "plant" workers aren't doing much better. One woman with 15 years had just started making $9/hour. When the workers began pushing for a raise, the bosses issued "No Match" letters to 8 of the leaders. These letters state that the social security number a worker is using doesn't match his/her name, even though they have been working here for years! The workers were told if they didn't have a "good" number they would be fired by August 10. This was clearly racist and sexist harassment against those organizing for a raise. The 8 walked out and everyone followed.

The bosses responded by changing temp agencies and replacing the strikers with black workers. At the same time, local nationalist immigration rights groups moved to lead the struggle. "10 de Marzo" is waging a media campaign against "No Match" letters while the Workers' Collaborative tried to negotiate for the workers. One of their organizers told the strikers that they would surely win because the bosses were replacing them with black workers, "who are lazy and slow."

PLP's presence was felt by the strikers from beginning to end. We weren't going to allow the bosses and the nationalist misleaders to pit black and Latin workers against each other and turn this strike into a mini-ethnic cleansing. At a Party club meeting, we talked about the need to expose the bosses and the temp agency as racist strike-breakers and to win the immigrant strikers to reach out to the black workers crossing the line. If we could link racist attacks against immigrants to the racist cop killing of Aaron Harrison (see article on front page), we could win workers on both sides of the line to see themselves as allies in the struggle against racist terror.

At a meeting with a group of strikers and supporters, a draft flier was approved and a plan was made to leaflet the workers crossing the line the next morning. Meanwhile, the misleaders were negotiating an end to the strike. As part of their "talks," they called off the picket line for the next morning.

In spite of this, immigrant strikers and black, Latin and white supporters reached out to the black workers crossing the line. Almost all of them took fliers. Once the flier started circulating inside, some workers came out to get more copies to take back inside. One woman, who had just dropped her daughter off for her first day of work, pulled over to talk. "I knew something had to be up," she said. "They never hired black kids here before." She said she was one of a few black families in a mostly Latin neighborhood and took a stack of fliers with her. She also said she would talk with her daughter.

Later that day, the strike ended with the company agreeing to take back the workers as needed, despite the fact that the sentiment of the strikers was, "We walked out together, we'll go back together." Before the strike, the company used to ship about 40,000 pallets of soap products a day. During the strike, that dropped to 7,000 and Lever Bros. threatened to start looking elsewhere. Some of the strikers are disgusted with Cygnus and say they will not return. But wherever they end up, they can be new members and friends of PLP, valuable additions to the movement for communist revolution. ✪

PLP-led Multi-Racial Group Sends Minutemen Packing

CHICAGO, August 4 — The planned Minutemen rally in front of the Mexican Consulate was finished before it got started. A multi-racial group led by PLP picketed the rally area, chanting "Racists Go Home!" and "Workers United Will Never Be Defeated" in both English and Spanish. Anti-racist protestors dominated the sidewalk and the Minutemen were silenced, turning a racist rally into a multi-racial demonstration of working-class unity.

When the Minutemen arrived, about two dozen of us were waiting for them. When they began taking pictures of us from across the street, somebody smashed their video camera. A protester ripped their American flag off a pole, hurling it onto Ashland Avenue. The crowd surrounded the Minutemen, yelling "Racists Go Home!" while passers-by honked their horns and cheered in support.

As police cars arrived, the Minutemen cowered behind them. We formed a picket line, growing in number and energy as more anti-racist protestors joined in. We chanted "La Clase Obrera No Tiene Frontera" ("Workers Have No Borders") and "Whose Streets? Our Streets!" We rallied in front of the Consulate, forcing the Minutemen to huddle on the side and point out protesters to the police. Three protesters, including one PLP member, were arrested. We stopped the Minutemen from having their rally and showed that we will fight racism, especially with all the Presidential candidates of both parties blaming undocumented immigrants for the attacks suffered by all workers due to the bosses' endless wars and financial crises.

workers unite!

Vets: There Can Be No Peace with Capitalism, Imperialism

"The times they are a changing" goes the old song. According to almost every poll, most active-duty, rank-and-file soldiers, vets, reserves and National Guard no longer favor the Iraq war. Vast majorities in this country, Iraq and indeed, the world agree with them. Iraq veterans, their families and supporters can testify to the troops' increased openness to anti-war ideas.

"The more things change, the more they stay the same" was how the predicament was summed up at the Veterans for Peace convention in St. Louis. The war continues. The casualty list grows; tens of thousands wounded come back to under-funded VA care; hundreds of thousands of Iraqis are slaughtered in the name of freedom and democracy. Unemployment and racism fuel the backdoor draft which Congress plans to expand with "The DREAM Act."

To those who remember the Vietnam War this predicament spans at least 40 years. After being forced to quit Vietnam — in part because of increasingly violent mass rebellion among the lower-ranking troops — the bosses spent the better part of 30 years rebuilding their "force structure." They were preparing for the inevitable next war to defend their imperialist empire.

The Iraq war is about more than blood for oil profits; it is about control of oil to force their imperialist competitors — like Russia, China and maybe even parts of the European Union — to bow to the U.S. bosses' strategic interests. This war is based on more than a lie or a mistake; U.S. capitalists are in a desperate fight to get the upper hand in their competition with rising Chinese bosses and others that need Mid-East oil to fuel their economies.

Build an Anti-Racist, Class-Conscious International Movement

Fool me once, shame on you! Fool me twice, shame on me! We don't want to build a movement that aids the bosses' attempts to rebuild their imperialist force structure. When liberal politicians talk about building a patriotic movement for peace they are preparing just such an outcome. Iran may well be next on their imperialist agenda.

Patriotism never serves the interest of the working class. Nationalism was invented by the capitalists to fool workers into fighting for the bosses' interests. National security is equal to the bosses' security. We have more in common with the Iraqi workers than the rich CEOs and bank directors that run the oil companies and every other major exploiter — or the generals and politicians that faithfully represent their interests.

Racism stands with nationalism as powerful tools in the bosses' bag of dirty tricks. Indeed, racism has historically been used to justify imperialist invasions as well as undermining working-class and soldier rebellions.

On the other hand, anti-racist rebellions produced some of the sharpest and most militant fights against imperialism in the Armed Forces to date. From the united black, Latin and white sailors on the aircraft carriers Kitty Hawk and Constellation that rebelled against the brass' racism and deployment to Vietnam to the nationwide defense of Billy Dean Smith, a black GI accused of fragging (killing) an officer, anti-racism has been the leading edge of GI resistance.

Join and Build the Revolutionary Communist PLP

Veterans, soldiers and workers can never be at peace with this system. The imperialist drive to maximize profits around the world must lead to bigger and more deadly wars. Since the beginning of the 20th century, the bosses have been dividing and re-dividing the world to the benefit of one or another capitalist. They've spilt rivers of our blood in this violent competition.

Every capitalist class must compete or die. Imperialism will never become benign or humanitarian. The only way to end imperialist wars is to tear out capitalism by its roots with communist revolution.

Soldiers and vets can play a key role in this process. By uniting with their working-class brothers and sisters, they can help lead a movement to turn the bosses' imperialist wars for profits into a war for workers' power. Let no more die for the bosses' imperialist nightmare!✪

Bosses' Answer to Newark Killings: Fascism

"I'm on the verge of telling my guys to suspend civil liberties and start frisking everybody. I'm at that point. What's wrong with that?" — Essex County, N.J. Sheriff Armando Fontoura.

NEWARK, N.J. — The recent execution-style killings of three college students in a school playground in this city's Vailsburg section has set off a firestorm of political activity. Key political forces, including recently-elected mayor Cory Booker, are moving quickly to capitalize on the justifiable anger that many residents feel about these murders. Fighting for a communist line within this bosses' morass becomes even more important.

Rutgers University in Newark is the home base of George "Killer" Kelling, a professor in the School of Criminal Justice and author of the "Broken Windows" theory of crime prevention. Kelling promotes large-scale arrests in urban areas for "quality-of-life" crimes like public drinking and homelessness. Supposedly this preserves "public order" and thereby prevents more serious crimes like rape and murder.

Kelling's false and unscientific theories particularly criminalize young black and Latino men. This "theory" was first practiced in a big way in New York City under Police Commissioner Bratton (now Los Angeles police chief). After Booker's election, he appointed one of Bratton's disciples, Gary McCarthy, to be Newark's Police Director.

Since he arrived, McCarthy has practiced Kelling's theories with a vengeance. Many long-time residents have relatives or friends who the cops have stopped or grabbed. Meanwhile, the city's murder rate has remained constant. Guns continue to flow into Newark; many go to the gang-bangers, who sell drugs under the cops' watchful eyes.

Several days after the shooting, a Latino juvenile, and then a Latino adult were arrested. The cops and media claim the adult is an undocumented immigrant. Racist Morristown Mayor Cresitello (who was shouted down by PLP-led anti-racists on July 28th) immediately called for a statewide use of local cops to serve as immigration agents in order to "prevent crime." Newark councilman Ron Rice, Jr. proposed a law requiring Newark cops to report arrested undocumented immigrants to Homeland Security. This is a blatant attempt to divide black and Latino workers, blaming immigrants for the problems capitalism has heaped upon both groups — mass racist unemployment, low wages, lousy schools — and use anti-immigrant racism to split the whole working class.

According to a fourth student who survived her shooting, the three other students were lined up against a wall before being shot in the head. There is no doubt that many young people have been desensitized to random violence. But the city's rulers want to use this senseless violence to push their racist agenda. The Star Ledger, their mouthpiece, gave its stamp of approval to comments by the father of one victim that Newark's parents are to blame for these incidents. The Ledger also called for more community "cooperation" with the cops. All of this is designed to take the heat off the capitalist system and advance Kelling's fascist "community policing" within this city.

Unemployment is an inevitable consequence of the capitalist drive to hold down wages. Since before the 1967 Newark rebellion, mass racist unemployment has led to a host of economic and social problems, including poverty, drugs, the breakdown of support systems, and alienation. Street crime is a product of this social dislocation. Fascist culture has added another dimension to this anti-social activity, glorifying violence. In any case, criminal actions can be traced directly to capitalism's class nature.

The biggest and most violent criminals are those who steal the labor of the working class (see article right), and then wage wars to expand their profit scheme. Communists in Vailsburg have a history of involvement in sharp struggle for the community's needs. We're immersed in campaigns to demand more jobs and recreation, particularly for our youth. This will continue. However, no reforms will solve the problems of Newark's workers. Only a communist revolution can give our young people the world they deserve and so desperately need.✪

Who's Stealing from Whom?

LOS ANGELES — "Whoever steals a pair of blue jeans will be fired immediately, and could even go to jail," yelled the boss.

In many garment factories, the bosses' security guards search purses and backpacks, supposedly to make sure workers don't "steal" the clothes they produce. History's biggest thieves are accusing their victims of actions they "legally" commit every day! So, "who's stealing from whom?"

For example, at the factory where workers produce Lucky Brand and Yanuck jeans, the pieces for the pants come from a cutting service. The manufacturer has invested the cost of the material, what he paid for cutting them, and for transportation, an average of $10 per pair.

However, the unconnected pieces are, by themselves, practically useless. They have no use value. But when the workers sew the pieces together, they "magically" become something useful — finished pants which *do* have use value. They can fill our need to clothe ourselves. Only we workers can, with our labor, add this value.

With this use value the pants can also be sold on the market. They now have *exchange* value because they can be bought with money. In the stores Yanuk jeans sell for $139 to $167; Lucky Brand from $90 to $132.

The Worker Adds The Value, But Who Reaps Almost Everything?

The manufacturer pays the garment boss (the subcontractor) $9 per completed pair. Let's say the subcontractor's cost for each finished pair is $5, – $3 in wages and the rest in rent, electricity, etc. The subcontractor's profit is then $4 per pair. In normal times we produce about 15,000 pairs weekly, netting the garment boss $60,000 profit per week. Meanwhile, the 200 garment workers who produce all this wealth receive, collectively, $45,000 per week. The boss makes $3 million a year and all the rest of us together only earn $2.34 million.

Where does his $3 million profit come from? From that part of the value that we've added to the pieces for which the boss does not pay us. This is what Karl Marx discovered, what he called "surplus value." This is the great secret of how the capitalists have become rich: stealing from us! And they have the nerve to call us thieves.

How Much Do The Manufacturer And The Store-owner Steal?

The manufacturer's cost is $19 per pair: $10 for the cut pieces, and another $9 paid to the garment boss (subcontractor). He then sells it to the store for $59, or a profit of $40 per pant. So 15,000 pairs per week gives him $600,000, or about $31 million per year.

The store-owner sells each pair for about $132, leaving him with $72 profit per pair. Selling 15,000 pairs weekly brings in $1,080,000 profit, or $56 million a year.

Thus, the three bosses together — the subcontractor, $3 million; the manufacturer, $31 million; and the store-owner, $56 million — steal more than $91 million a year (less the manufacturer's and store-owner's costs for rent, utilities, wages and taxes). How many thousands of millions of dollars do the rest of the garment bosses steal from the tens of thousands of Los Angeles garment workers?

Workers Don't Need The Bosses Or Their Profit System

The bosses are only interested in exchange value. The clothing we produce has a lot of use value, but if the bosses can't sell it, they would rather throw it away. That's why millions of people worldwide don't have enough clothes. The food that a farm worker produces has tremendous use value, but, under capitalism, he who can't pay is condemned to starve. That's why every year over 54 million people globally die of hunger.

Our labor power makes the earth produce food, it makes steel and concrete into bridges, roads, buildings, houses and weapons, material into clothing, and metals into useful tools. We add the use value, which fills humanity's needs. We don't need exchange value, which enables a handful of capitalist parasites to condemn billions of our class brothers and sisters to poverty. We don't need such exploitation or money that this criminal, racist, murderous profit system imposes on us.

We need a system based on use value, a system that produces to meet the needs of the international working class. A system without bosses, profits or wars for profit — communism. To achieve it, we must unite and join and build the Progressive Labor Party, so that millions of workers can destroy capitalism with communist revolution. Read and distribute CHALLENGE, PLP's newspaper. Join the Party of the international working class!✪

fight for communism

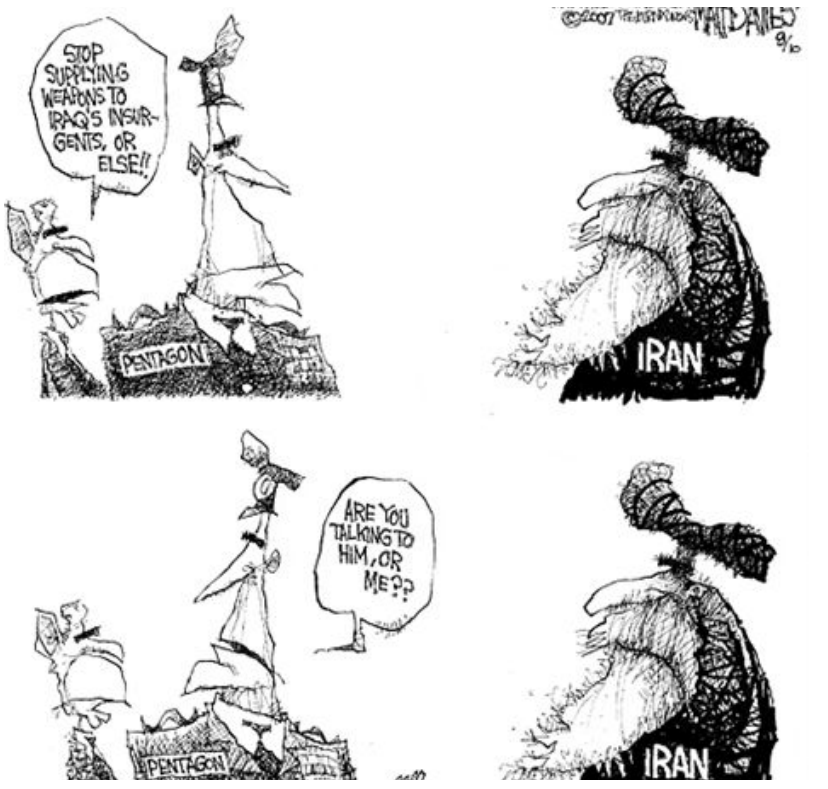
NEA Teachers back PLP Attack on Electoral Circus

PHILADELPHIA, PA, July – "Our responsibility as teachers is to fight for a better education for our working-class students," said a young comrade in a speech to the NEA Convention here. "To do this we must unite with them and their families to oppose shrinking funds for schools while more and more taxes flow to Iraq. No capitalist politician is going to help us build this fight. The main goal of these politicians is to defend U.S. imperialism in the Middle East and to send our disproportionately black and Latino students off to kill and die for oil profits. Their plans for 'education reform' are to raise student achievement so working-class youth can be recruited as effective soldiers and workers in war production. The leadership of the NEA is doing us no favors by pushing these politicians or the whole electoral circus. Instead, we must discuss how to teach our students to fight for their own class interests. We must not allow politicians to distract us from using our strength as a 3.2 million strong organization to fight against war and fascism."

In a National Education Association (NEA) Representative Assembly (RA) devoted to speeches from every Democratic candidate for President (and one Republican), this young comrade's speech demanding that "no politicians or their representatives be invited or allowed to speak at the 2008 convention" was electrifying. Teachers applauded and approached us to support our ideas. We sold more subscriptions to CHALLENGE-DESAFIO than we have at the past five conventions put together. When our politics are in sharp contrast to the NEA's pandering to Democratic Party politicians, we get a great response.

In the RA and the California Caucus, we struggled for many left ideas: attacking No Child Left Behind as educational policy preparing for war, opposing immigration policy that makes legalization dependent upon military service, attacking pro-war propaganda in the NEA newsletter, calling for an end to the war in Afghanistan and withdrawal from Iraq leaving no military bases behind, and raising the need to fight against racist unemployment among black and Latino youth. We were also active in several special-interest caucuses, raising the struggle against Democratic Party politicians, against pacifism and to support workers' struggles. This led to making several contacts, (including Japanese teachers — see CHALLENGE 8/15/07) and strengthening ties with friends we had known from other years.

We had a forum contrasting the liberal idea of "saving" working-class students from the military with the communist plan of winning our students as comrades to lead the revolutionary struggle by entering the military. Our literature reflected this important difference; our leaflet about the DREAM Act said that the immigrant students the bosses want to recruit to the Army are capitalism's grave-diggers, and that we welcome the challenge to win them to organize the Party in the military. Between mass and hand-to-hand distributions, NEA delegates took 800 CHALLENGES and nearly 8,000 leaflets.



IDEAS LEAD TO ACTION: TEACHERS TAKE ON A RACIST

In the context of our efforts to fight for the most left ideas and to build ties with other teachers, we and our friends had a dramatic struggle in the California Caucus against an anti-immigrant racist from Fontana. When he used dehumanizing, racist language to attack immigrants, comrades rushed to the microphone to object. When Caucus misleaders shut down our comrades instead of the racist, we led a multiracial group to circulate a petition demanding the racist be stopped. The next day, this group went to the microphone to protest. Our principled action against racism exposed the misleaders and won the respect of other delegates, who, because of our leadership in waging class struggle in our local, state, and national union meetings, are coming closer to Progressive

Bosses' Long-Term Negligence Paralyzes NYC Subways

NEW YORK CITY, August 8 — Today an hour of torrential rain paralyzed this city for over four hours, flooding subway tunnels and train lines and leading to a complete breakdown of communications. The bosses have spent billions of dollars on Homeland Security. Here they have focused their publicity campaigns on the security of the city's subways and bridges. But today it was capitalism's own internal failing and deterioration — not any external force or threat — that left workers stranded in the early morning rush hour.

People wandered aimlessly from station to station searching for transportation and information. Muffled and incomprehensible announcements over public address systems in the worker-less, automated stations only added to the chaos. Blackberries and cell phones proved useless as the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) website overloaded and news stations lamely suggested that workers "avoid the MTA until further notice."

The city bosses scrambled to deflect blame for their complete inability to respond to the crisis. Ultimately they cited the National Weather service for "failing to warn them." But the bosses have known for years that when the 6,000 miles of sewer pipes back up, the water entering subway tunnels has nowhere to go. In 2004 an early morning storm caused similar problems. Still the city did nothing to correct it.

Earlier this summer an explosion of an 80-year-old steam line critically injured two people, and has kept a section of midtown a "frozen-zone" for most of the summer. With the recent bridge collapse in Minnesota, New Yorkers are rightfully worried about the city's infrastructure that relies heavily on a network of bridges and tunnels connecting the five boroughs and neighboring suburbs. The Brooklyn Bridge received a "safety" rating of only 2.9 on a 7-point scale, yet no plans exist for any work on the bridge in the near future.

An important aspect of this criminal neglect is the fact that a sizeable majority of the subway-riding public and the transit workers themselves are black and Latino, and the racism of the bosses makes them even less concerned about these workers' plight.

Can they fix all of this? Not easily. With the cost of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan running over $300 million a day, the rulers will have to try to squeeze the working class even more to find the hundreds of billions a city like New York needs. They will also have to convince some of their own class, through threat or appeal, to give up some of their profits in the form of higher taxes.

Since the 1970's, some like the more far-seeing banker Felix Rohatyn, concerned with the long-term survival of his capitalist system, have been advocating repair of the infrastructure of NYC and the country. But so far many bosses don't seem to be volunteering to sacrifice their immediate profits for the well-being of the entire capitalist class.

Workers have no side in this bosses' dogfight. The main lesson from this situation is that a system based on greed and individualism can't be fixed. It's rotten to the core.✪

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Utah Miners Facing Death From Owner-Govt. Collusion

The six miners who have been trapped in a coal mine near Huntington, Utah, for eight days at this writing (August 14) face death as a direct result of the collusion between the bosses' government and the coal bosses. Once again, capitalism's profits are first, workers' lives last.

This murderous act follows close on the heels of three fatalities in an Indiana mine, adding to the 56 deaths since the Sago disaster 19 months ago in West Virginia. With all the hoopla and "official concern" following Sago, nothing has been done to avert more such deaths.

The CEO of the Crandall Canyon Mine, Robert Murray, cynically blamed an "earthquake" for the mine collapse. But scientists at the University of Utah Seismograph Station said the recorded movement in the area was not a quake but rather "consistent with a mine-type collapse." In the last 12 years, half a dozen other mine collapses have caused similar seismic waves.

The fact is, Crandall Canyon has been issued 325 citations for safety violations since January 2004. The mine owners were ordered to pay over $150,000 in penalties. But the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), true to form, working hand in glove with the bosses, does little to enforce these regulations and allows the bosses to go their merry way killing miners in exchange for some paltry fine.

In this case, just last month inspectors had cited the mine for violating federal rules "requiring" at least two separate passageways be available for escape in an emergency, the third time in less than two years the mine had been so cited. No wonder. Bush's first appointee to head MSHA had served as general manager of the Energy West Mining Co. right there in Huntington.

The criminality of the mine owners and their government are clear in the absence of emergency communications equipment, the lack of adequate escape provisions, the bosses' refusal to give miners adequate emergency oxygen supplies and the insufficient system for mobilizing rescue teams.

Meanwhile, the United Mine Workers union, allied with the Democratic Party and their constant "promises" to fix the situation, has been betraying miners' struggles for decades and has helped the owners keep most of the industry non-union. The starting pay in the non-union Crandall Canyon mine is $8 an hour. Three of the trapped miners are Latino immigrants. Thus, the owners take advantage of anti-immigrant racism to pay poverty wages to ALL miners, white as well as Latino, and thereby reap super-profits.

Miners, historically one of the most militant sections of the U.S. working class, must draw on their tradition of armed struggle with the coal barons, combined with the leadership of communist ideas, and organize to fight to get rid of the profit system that sends them to an early grave.✪

<Letters>

Israel 'Finishing what Nazis started'?

Thousands of holocaust survivors, many still with the number given to them by the Nazis tattooed in their arms, protested in early June in front of of the office of Ehud Olmert, the Primer Minister of Israel. Dressed in the uniform and the yellow star that they were forced to wear inside the concentration camps, these old survivors protested the harsh economic situation they suffer today.

Of the 250,000 survivors still living in Israel, 180,000 receive no help from the Zionist state, and 80,000 live with income below the poverty level. Most of them are of Russian origin and don't even get the 125 Euros a month Germany provides to camp survivors. Many of the survivors have actually gone back to live in Germany where the monthly compensation is higher and medical care is free.

The protest denounced the "insulting raise" of 20 dollars offered by the Israeli government to "the most needy ones." Speakers at the protest accused Olmert of a "biological solution" and of "trying to finish what the Nazis started."

The Zionist government tried to stop the protest which included thousands of supporters. The situation for survivors in Israel is actually worse than in most European countries. Throughout the years, Israeli governments have actually kept some 700 million Euros from survivors and their descendants. This money is part of the recovery of the loot stolen by the Nazis from Jews during the 3rd Reich.

Olmert, fearing the political impact of this situation, said that a rise in the subsidy to survivors will be discussed, while at the same time trying to dismiss the issue as being just politics. The "politics" that he really wants to ignore is that the rulers of modern Israel are the heirs of the Zionists who collaborated with the Nazis (like the Judenrat) and later founded the state of Israel. They care very little about the victims of the Nazi holocaust, and have used their memories to cover their own atrocities against Palestinians. As Yosef Cherni, an 82 year-old survivor of the Warsaw Ghetto and Treblinka said: "With their actions, the state of Israel is denying the Holocaust."

An Anti-Zionist reader

Minnesota Workers Condemn Bosses' Murderers

On August 1 during rush hour here in Minneapolis, the I-35W bridge disintegrated, killing at least seven workers, with the death toll expected to climb. Our sympathies go out to the families of the dead and injured. There were many working-class heroes, black, Latino and white, men and women, who risked their own lives to rescue victims. The whole site looked hellish, with most of the bridge in the Mississippi River, and with cars crushed beneath steel and concrete. One main beam gave way and, in a chain reaction, the whole bridge just fell apart from one end to the other.

All the bosses, from racist Governor Tim Pawlenty to those in Washington, are to blame for this tragedy. In 2005, a U.S. Department of Transportation report said the bridge was "structurally deficient" and should be replaced entirely, at a cost of $800 million, half from the State and matching funds from Washington. But instead, the money went to the racist, imperialist Iraq war.

As with New Orleans' levees, Bush & Co. have workers' blood on their hands. Pawlenty is just as guilty because he knew the bridge had problems, but refused to close it because Minnesota trucking companies who use the bridge would have lost millions. Again, bosses' profits were more important than workers' lives.

At our workplace there was lots of political discussion about capitalism's disregard for workers' lives and how communism would be a better way to run society. CHALLENGE readers, friends of the Party, took up a small collection for the Red Cross Disaster Relief Fund. The readers, black, Latino, citizen and immigrant, are distributing a PLP leaflet condemning the bosses' anti-working class murder of our brother and sister workers. These readers are also sponsoring an SEIU union resolution written by a fellow worker supporting the victims and their families.

Capitalism and bosses are killers. They will kill workers in the U.S. just as readily as they kill U.S. working-class soldiers and Iraqi workers in Iraq. Workers need communist revolution, from Minnesota to Oaxaca, Mexico to Baghdad to liberate our class from the hell of capitalism.

Minnesota Red

PL'ers, CHALLENGE Get 'Fantastic Reception'

The following is from a comrade who came from another city to participate in the LA Summer Project and wrote to his CHALLENGE readers upon returning home.)

Dear CHALLENGE Reader,

I just returned from the Los Angeles Summer Project. It was a fantastic experience! Another PLP member and I were reinvigorated by the people we met and the activities we were involved in. We plan to improve our political activity here based on those experiences.

Many young people participated. Some gave leadership to the project, organizing leaflet distributions and CHALLENGE sales and led a study group I attended. I discussed a CHALLENGE article and the importance (and reluctance of some people) to ask for money when we distribute the paper.

Some felt we shouldn't ask poor people for money. Others felt it was liberalism on their part not to ask. We finally agreed that CHALLENGE is a good and important paper, the paper of the working class, and that we should ask people to support it in many ways, including by donating money to help pay for its production. We realized that we need to struggle to make donations an important part of distributing CHALLENGE.

The most important part of the Project is organizing industrial workers in the LA area. I saw a list of perhaps 40 factories with anywhere from 100 to 5,000 workers at each factory! Eighty percent of outsourcing is not overseas but right here in the USA and LA is a leading area for this reindustrialization.

At a plant we went to we had a fantastic reception. Most workers rolled down their car windows on the way in, took a leaflet and a paper, listened to what we had to say and often donated money. I've been selling CHALLENGE for over 30 years among farm workers, garment workers, bus drivers and at colleges, and I've NEVER seen the kind of reception we got at this factory.

I encourage all PLP members and friends to participate in this Project and other such projects in the future. These workers are very open to our ideas and since industrial workers are the backbone of the economy, it's crucial that we organize them.

I want to thank those who donated money to help pay for the Summer Project.

Lauds Garment Struggles; Queries Outcome

It was very exciting to read about the recent struggle in a garment factory! It seems like this sharp class struggle was built on a deep foundation of ties with other workers. It is always great for the party when comrades can build the kind of ties that allow co-workers to step up in struggle against the boss like these workers did. I was wondering, when I read the article, what happened to the original issue of the boss docking pay for those who did not clock in and out properly. Clearly the main victory is the workers' solidarity and left ideas built during the struggle whether the boss gives in or not, but it would help the readers understand the lessons of the struggle better if we had a little more detail about its results. Based on whether the immediate struggle was won or lost, how did the workers react? I've been involved in struggles where our demands were met and struggle where they were not, and I think that changes what and how workers learn from their experience. I look forward to an update.

A curious comrade

DESAFIO Brings Politics into ESL Class

In teaching English as a second language, we find DESAFIO a useful tool. We point out articles in Spanish and English about immigration and when visiting students' homes, getting to know them better. We find the immigration bill clauses demanding a knowledge of English can trap people into thinking they're never "good enough." In fact, most classes in languages drill on grammar and don't inspire confidence in speaking ability. Sometimes, we make humor out of the irregularities and encourage people to talk about their experiences. Then, the conversation turns to how capitalism sets up many barriers

to a better life for us all.

In reality, teaching useful English along with the politics about jobs and daily living is more practical. While we take seriously our ability to convey communication skills, teaching with DESAFIO fosters fewer illusions in us teachers, too, about "helping those less fortunate" and gives the right priority to communist ideas.

[Although, we have also found it useful to supplement CHALLENGE/DESAFIO with texts which are cheaply available second-hand such as "Side by Side" by Steven Molinsky and Bill Bliss and "The Oxford Picture Dictionary" by Norma Shapiro and Jayme Goldstein.]

We got out notices for free classes in buildings in the block of our church and still make home visits in a large apartment complex. Delivering papers, we learn of personal problems, such as their children sick in the home countries — where it is impossible to visit and safely return to the US. One of us attended a fertility clinic in order to provide translation. This same teacher was asked to be a witness for a marriage license. Holidays and BBQs are celebrated — teachers and students with families far away, but happy company together.

ESL outreach has expanded to day laborers waiting for work in "muster zones" throughout our state. Here we meet up with other volunteer teachers from churches and immigrant rights groups, whom we will get to know much better. We use flip charts of color copies of pages from the Spanish/English dictionary. We provide tools like hammers and tape measures, practice useful phrases such as "does the job provide lunch?" and — when harassment by the police is absent — discuss articles in DESAFIO.

The process is creative — sometimes we sit on a tree stump or a milk crate. There is much humor, when we all pronounce each others' words wrong. The jokes are ripe with puns and homonyms — we locals are sometimes a bit "loco." We can honestly say that we've learned more about the people from eight various countries than we have taught them.

NJ Red ESL Teacher

Fighting Anti-Iraqi Racism on Front Lines

I recently replied to a letter from my cousin (printed in the last issue of CHALLENGE) where I explained that if all soldiers cared about was surviving they would rebel and go home. I explained that I thought soldiers were more worried about being punished and losing rank and pay if they rebelled against the war. In response my cousin sent me this letter:

Hey, how are you doing? I got your letter today. Everything is going as good as it can be here – I am still alive. I hit my first I.E.D. [improvised explosive device] the other day. It rattled me pretty good. I am fine with no injury except for headaches...

Your letter really resonated with what I've been struggling with the most. Lately I've been feeling like this is pointless; soldiers are getting shot or blown up on a daily basis. Everyday someone comes to tell me that they've been blown up or in a firefight. Still people do not refuse

continued on next page

<More Letters >

to fight. What sharper contradiction is there than that? It is definitely more about the UCMJ [uniform code of military justice], article 15s [a common reprimand] and pay and rank loss than about surviving. But it also may have to do with how they look at themselves: as the saying goes, death before dishonor.

I was talking to a friend about how nothing is changing for the better. He said we are shooting more people and blowing up more houses and buildings, yet we are getting shot and targeted with bigger I.E.D.s. I told him it is never going to get any better because we're killing the people we're supposed to be helping. He agreed, but said there was nothing we can do. I talked about becoming a conscientious objector, refusing to go. He said you'd probably get an article 15, lose pay and people would look down on you. As long as I stay with the tank, I'll be alive.

I talk to a lot of people about the same thing. Another friend of mine told me how his unit was in a firefight (one sided) where insurgents shot grenades and small arms fire at them. They replied with Bradleys, Strykers, and Apaches demolishing a whole city block. They also went black on ammo. [What that translates to is two armored personnel carriers equipped with tank turrets and a helicopter shot up the block with missiles, artillery, and heavy machine gun fire until every weapon ran out of ammo]. He told me that within hours people were lining up on the streets with all their belongings to leave the city. He said "I hope that made it better." But I think it made it worse. Now there are more abandoned houses for the insurgents to hide weapons and stage from and they are more likely to get support from locals.

This week (I am writing this over a week's worth of time) I struggled with racism in the army toward the Iraqi people. I had to treat I.A. [Iraqi Army] soldiers. One had severe burns and a missing hand. The other had his foot and both his arms blown off.

I treated both patients: stabilizing the burn victim while the other patient was crashing so fast we had to stick a central line into his chest and force fluid into him. Another infantry guy and I got them into a Bradley. I had the infantry guy hold IV bags and continue to force fluid into both patients while I breathed for the more critical soldier who unfortunately died on the way.

The infantry guy got out while I was still working on the guy who died, trying to revive him. The medics who work at the aid station just stood around doing nothing. The infantry guy came back to help me unload the patient. Afterward he told me that for an "American" the medics would be all over them to help. "The I.A. is doing the job out there; it could have been me who kicked down the door and got blown up." It's really screwed up that they stood around like that. He said he wished he spoke Arabic so he could have told the I.A. soldiers how sorry we were that one of their guys died. Everyday he talks about the racism.

Even worse is watching innocent people being shot because they are mistaken for I.E.D. placers. We are experiencing the loss of humanity.

Military Build-up Pits U.S. Bosses vs. Russians, Chinese

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) was scheduled to meet on August 16. Presidents of its six member countries — China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan — will attend. The presidents of Iran, Mongolia and Turkmenistan and the Foreign Ministers of India and Pakistan will be observers. Iran and Mongolia have applied for membership. This meeting marks a sharpening inter-imperialist rivalry and points to the need for us to redouble our efforts to build for communist revolution.

Prior to the summit, the SCO will be conducting "Peace Mission 2007," its largest military "counter-terrorism" exercise ever, involving some 6,500 troops, more than 500 pieces of military equipment and over 80 aircraft. U.S. imperialists see these exercises as further proof that the SCO, dominated by Russia and China, was created to counter U.S. influence in resource-rich Central Asia and to stop NATO's expansion eastward. William Odom, a Senior Fellow of the Hudson Institute, says, "The SCO is the most dangerous organization that Americans have never heard of." U.S. rulers have responded with their own massive military exercise, dubbed "Valiant Shield" (from August 6-13), involving three aircraft carriers, over 22,000 troops, more than 30 ships and some 290 planes. Navy Admiral Robert Willard, commander of the Pacific Fleet, said, "It's a demonstration of the U.S. military's commitment to the region [Asia-Pacific] and the high level of readiness of our forces, even in very busy operational times."

The SCO summit and these military exercises point to sharpening inter-imperialist struggle over world domination — oil and gas being at the eye of this storm. Wider and more lethal wars — speeding toward World War III — are the inexorable outcome of the world bosses' dogfight. Central Asia has become an important battlefield.

Shortly after the Soviet Union's demise, the imperialists began their fight for control of Central Asia's newly-independent states. This has only intensified as the imperialists' struggle to control the world's oil and gas resources has become more desperate, especially since China's oil will be depleted in an estimated 14 years, the U.S.'s by the year 2016 and the North Sea's [England] by 2015.

Therefore, at stake in Central Asia are not only its 15 billion barrels of proven oil reserves and the more than nine trillion cubic meters of gas but also the major role it plays in the fight to control Eurasia. Zbigniew Brzezinski, a senior strategist for U.S. imperialism, says in "The Grand Chessboard," the power which controls Eurasia controls the world.

Strategically located, the control of Central Asia's resources are centered around three things: first, control and production of the oil and gas; second, control of the pipelines that will take them to the markets; and third, to which markets they should flow.

The Chinese and the Russians want these resources to flow east — to China, India and Pakistan. The U.S. and some European bosses want them to flow west to the European market, to break their dependence on Russian energy supplies. With this, U.S. rulers hope to get the European bosses to side with them in any global confrontation. Some European bosses, however, are looking east and want to hitch their wagon to the rising powers in that region.

Whatever the outcome of these butchers' squabble, workers have nothing to gain by siding with any imperialists or with their local bosses. Our struggle is to win the industrial working class and the soldiers in the bosses' armies to a revolutionary communist outlook. Both are crucial for mobilizing all sectors of the working class for revolution. Only by recruiting them to a mass Party will we be able to turn the bosses' impending global war into a war for workers' power and the building of a communist society.✪

RED EYE ON THE NEWS

Below are excerpts from mainstream newspapers that may be of use for our readers. Abbreviations: NYT=New York Times, GW=Guardian Weekly, LAT=Los Angeles Times

Big anti-war groups help Dems lie

…The Democratic bumper-sticker message of a quick end to the [Iraq] conflict — however much it appeals to primary voters — oversimplifies…

...Even as they call for an end to the war and pledge to bring the troops home, the Democratic presidential candidates are setting out positions that could leave the United States engaged in Iraq for years.

The candidates are…hoping to tamp down any expectation that the war would abruptly end if they were elected….saying the conditions more than a year from now remain too uncertain….

A new phase of the debate seems to be unfolding, with antiwar groups giving the Democrats latitude to take positions short of a full and immediate withdrawal. Neither Moveon.org nor its affiliated group, Americans Against Escalation in Iraq, have sought to press Democrats…. (NYT, 8/12)

Ally? Oops!

Gen. Musharraf is also under pressure from the White House, where some officials seem to think they invaded the wrong country after 9/11. (GW, 8/10)

'Living green' is a no-struggle cop-out

Dozens of new books seem to provide an answer: we can save the world by embracing "better, greener lifestyles."…It's easy. Just make your own bread, butter, cheese, jam, chutneys and pickles, keep a milking cow, a few pigs, goats, geese, ducks, chickens, beehives, gardens and orchards. Well, what are you waiting for?

You can save the planet from your kitchen — if you have endless time and plenty of land.

…Green consumerism is another form of atomization — a substitute for collective action….Hard political choices will have to be made, and the economic elite…must be challenged, not groomed and flattered. (GW, 8/3)

Built after Watts, hospital closing

Martin Luther King Jr.-Harbor Hospital, built in the aftermath of the Watts riots and one of the few hospitals serving the poorest residents of South Los Angeles, is headed for closing after federal regulators found Friday that it was unable to meet minimum standards for patient care….

But local officials worried about…residents of the Watts/Willowbrook area of Los Angeles.

"They are going to be left without a safety net for healthcare,"….Supervisors were aware that the hospital was being nicknamed Killer King by people who lived in the neighborhood….

Others echoed the criticism. "The Board of Supervisors failed to put enough money and personnel into the hospital"…. (NYT, 8/11)

'Rule of law' twisted vs. Islamics

Jon B. Eisenberg knows something so secret that the government will let him write it down only in a secure facility.

Mr. Eisenberg is suing the government on behalf of clients who say they were illegally wiretapped by the National Security Agency. Yet he was required to write an appellate brief in a government office, supervised by a Justice Department Security officer….

"We were not allowed to keep a copy of what we wrote"….

At its center is a document that Mr. Eisenberg's clients, an Islamic charity and two of its lawyers, say proves that their international communications were subject of N.S.A. eavesdropping….

6. FREE MARKET TRIUMPHALISM
PEOPLE SHOULD SHOP AROUND FOR HEALTH CARE, LIKE ANY OTHER CONSUMER ITEM--
--INSTEAD OF RUSHING OFF TO THE NEAREST DOCTOR WITH EVERY LITTLE TUMOR OR HEART ATTACK!

The government's fundamental argument…is that national security concerns require dismissal….

As for Mr. Eisenberg…. "So, it's like this," he said… "yesterday I wrote a brief, of which I was not allowed to keep a copy, responding to arguments which I was not permitted to see, which will be met by a reply which I will not be permitted to see." (NYT, 8/13)

Finance emperors have no clothes?

Warren E. Buffett once said when the tide goes out, you find out who is naked. There is suddenly a lot of skin showing on Wall Street. (NYT, 8/3)

Sounds like we need communism!

After the industrial revolution, the gap in living standards between the richest and the poorest countries started to accelerate, from wealth disparity of about 4 to 1 in 1800 to more that 50 to 1 today. Just as there is no agreed explanation for the industrial Revolution, economists cannot account well for the divergence between rich and poor nations or they would have better remedies to offer.

Many commentators point to a failure of political and social institutions as the reason that poor countries remain poor. But the proposed medicine of institutional reform "has failed repeatedly to cure the patient." (NYT, 8/7)

'67 Detroit Rebellion Shows Workers' Potential To Take Power

PART II – (Part I described the racist conditions that triggered the rebellion.)

This was not a race riot. Black and white people participated together, not fighting one another, as thousands demonstrated, marched and rallied in the streets. Young people broke store windows and urged members of the community to help themselves to what they needed. The uprising was led by blacks who continued to face the worst living and working conditions that U.S. capitalism had to offer. In addition, although youth participated in large numbers and often took the lead, adult workers and Vietnam veterans played an important role.

Almost immediately, the cops cordoned off banks and pawnshops: banks, in order to protect the ruling class' money, and pawnshops, because that's where the guns were. And the ruling class had good reason to be scared: many of the participants were veterans who had learned how to fight in Vietnam.

This led to attacks on police stations: "Between 10 p.m. and midnight on the second, third and fourth days, the scene of battle shifted from the streets to police and fire stations. On Monday, July 24, within a 50-minute period, nine different police and fire posts in widely separate parts of the city were under heavy sniper fire. Some of the officers present described it as being under siege. The next night, the same thing happened again. The third day, it happened at 3:00 p.m. and at night. "That dedicated revolutionaries were involved in gun-sniping and arson incidents seems certain." (Locke, pp.128-30).

Over the course of seven days, there were many more reports of sniper fire directed at cops, National Guardsmen, and members of the Army's 82nd and 101st Airborne divisions. President Johnson had sent more than 10,000 federal troops to Detroit on Tuesday, July 25 when it became clear that Detroit's police force was completely unable to restore "law and order."

Interestingly, politicians and religious leaders sent to pacify the crowds were not successful. Congressman John Conyers, a black reverend and two so-called community leaders drove onto 12th Street, and using a bullhorn while standing on the hood of their car, tried to persuade the crowd to disperse. The young men who had been taunting the police turned their attention and anger to these men. "One man climbed on the hood of the car and tried to wrestle the bullhorn from Conyers, while others chanted and shouted when he tried to speak." (Locke, p. 31) Still others threw bottles. Sensing that their mission wasn't working and that they were in danger, the officials left.

The police and troops responded to the uprising by arresting 7,000 Detroiters and beating countless more. A makeshift jail was set up in the women's bathhouse on Belle Isle (a public park) dubbed "Belcatraz" by its inmates. Of the 43 people who died, most were killed by the police and National Guard (and a handful by store-owners).

As a direct result of the uprising, the Big Three auto companies (GM, Ford and Chrysler) hired 10,000 more black workers (although the number of jobs was limited compared to the needs of the unemployed). DRUM, the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement, led by militant young black autoworkers, grew out of the uprising. In May 1968, they led a multi-racial wildcat strike of 4,000 Dodge workers, protesting the horrendous working conditions at Chrysler. They were also protesting the UAW's passivity and racism. Its leaders were unwilling to defend or fight for black workers.

PLP worked in and with DRUM and other similar groups arising after the rebellion. The Newark uprising, just weeks earlier, spawned the United Black Brotherhood (UBB) at the Mahwah, N.J. Ford plant. The PLP-led Workers Action Movement (WAM) and UBB shut down Ford for a week in June, 1973 over racism, health and safety and forced overtime.

This helped set the tone for three wildcats against Chrysler in Detroit. One shut the Jefferson Assembly plant when a black worker who had been called a racist name by his foreman climbed to the top of the plant and shut off the power. His co-workers carried him out of the plant on their shoulders. The foreman was fired.

The wildcats peaked in August 1973 with the PLP/WAM-led take-over of Chrysler's Mack Avenue stamping plant. Many of these workers in New Jersey and Detroit were participants in the two cities' uprisings.

There is much to learn from the 1967 Detroit rebellion. We salute the courageous workers, youth and Vietnam veterans who led these battles and honor the memory of those who died. But as long as the bosses continue to hold power, whatever we win will be quickly taken away, and racism and war will forever plague our lives.

Today, much of Detroit is in ruins, with 50,000 abandoned buildings and less than half the population it had 50 years ago. Its last supermarket just closed. The empty lots, the boarded-up factories and homes, the failing schools, are the result of the inter-imperialist rivalry among the world's billionaires. Ford, GM and Chrysler are being challenged by Toyota, Honda, Mercedes and others. Wiping out 100,000 jobs, in retreat, and unable to defend their home market, the U.S. auto bosses have laid waste to cities like Detroit, Flint and many more.

This rebellion showed the potential for workers to take power. To make that a reality we need a mass PLP leading millions of workers, soldiers and youth to seize power with communist revolution. Then we'll reap the full fruits of our labor.

Sources/Suggestions for further reading:

Detroit, I Do Mind Dying by Dan Georgakas and Marvin Surkin

Working Detroit by Steve Babson

Arc of Justice by Kevin Boyle

Origins of the Urban Crisis: Race and Inequality in Postwar Detroit by Thomas J. Sugrue

The 1967 Riot by Hubert G. Locke

People in Motion by William M. Gilbreth

A City on Fire – HBO documentary

Report on the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders (Kerner Commission Report)

Progress Report of the New Detroit Committee

'Harry Potter' Casts Capitalist Spells

The political message of the latest and last Harry Potter book is that the only alternative to fascism is the cheerful acceptance of and loyalty to the capitalist system with all its inherent inequalities.

The book opens with the evil wizard Voldemort's bid to rule the world by a revolt at the Ministry of Magic. There is an obvious parallel to Hitler's rise to power and persecution of the Jews. Muggle-borns, witches and wizards born into non-magical families, "are being rounded up as we speak … unless you can prove that you have at least one close wizarding relative, you … must suffer the punishment."

Harry goes underground and leads a multi-creature (and multi-racial) struggle against Voldemort. The great final battle features a united front of centaurs, thestrals, hippogriffs, house elves, etc. After the battle, black wizard Kingsley Shacklebolt becomes Minister of Magic.

But the titanic struggle is no revolution; it's a restoration of things as they were. The magic world remains a class-ridden society of rich and poor, master and slave. You'd think someone as imaginative as author Rowling could conjure up a magical community based on sharing, not on wages and exploitation.

Indeed, in this universe mutual understanding is generally impossible. Witches and wizards live in hiding because ordinary people cannot understand them. Goblins are "a different breed of being" and true friendship with them is inconceivable. Consequently, the book's anti-racism is only superficial.

This underlying racism comes out most clearly in Rowling's treatment of slavery. Dobby, the rebel house elf, proudly proclaims, "Dobby has no master! Dobby is a free elf," but always voluntarily obeys Harry... and winds up dead. Harry's paternalistic kindness transforms Kreacher, the servile elf who parrots his brutal former masters' racist beliefs, into a Jeeves-like butler and then into the leader of all the elves, shouting "Fight for my master!" The last image in the main story is Harry Potter lying in a four-poster bed, ordering his slave to bring him a sandwich!

Racism is accompanied by a frequent insistence on sexist gender roles. Shameless, childless Bellatrix Lestrange is vanquished by the archetypal Mom, Molly Weasley. Meanwhile evil Narcissa Malfoy is finally redeemed by her maternal instinct.

Harry Potter restores this racist, sexist version of utopia by becoming a sacrificial lamb. At one point, Christ-like, "he was the master of the pain; he felt it, yet was apart from it." Harry dies, goes to heaven and is resurrected. His willingness to sacrifice himself makes him "the true master of death." This is in line with our current rulers' rhetoric about sacrifice in the name of national interest during times of war.

This messianic mythology also contains a key lesson our masters want to teach us: "It is a curious thing, Harry, but perhaps those who are best suited to power are those who have never sought it. Those who, like you, have leadership thrust upon them, and take up the mantle because they must, and find to their own surprise that they wear it well."

In other words, according to Rowling, the children of the capitalist ruling class, who do not seek power but have it "thrust upon them," are natural-born rulers!

Racism, sexism, religion, loyalty to the system and its "rightful" rulers — no wonder the ruling class has pumped up the Harry Potter concept into a multi-million-dollar industry!

To this garbage, we communists reply: The working class best wears the mantle of leadership and power, and we shall use it to set up a classless society without racism or sexism.✪

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